PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE transactions comprized in this history take up about nine years. The action commences with the account of Hotspur's being defeated and killed [14-03] ; and closes with the death of King Henry IV. and the coronation of King Henry V. [H[2-13.]

THEOBALD.

This play was entered at Stationers' Hall, August 23, 1600.

STEEVENS.

The Second Part of King Henry IV. I suppose to have been written in 1598. See An Attempt to ascertain the Order of Shakspeare's Plays, vol. ii. MALONE.

Mr Upton thinks these two plays improperly called The First and Second Parts of Henry the Fourth. The first play ends, he says, with the peaceful settlement of Henry in the kingdom by the defeat of the rebels. This is hardly true : for the rebels are not yet finally suppressed. The second, he tells us, shows Henry the Fifth in the various lights of a good-natured rake, till, on his father's death, he assumes a more manly character. This is true: but this representation gives us no idea of a dramatick action. These two plays will appear to every reader, who shall peruse them without ambition of critical discoveries, to be so connected, that the second is merely a sequel to the first : to be two only because they are too long to be one. JOHNSON.

Of this play there are two quartos, in Mr. Malone's Collection, both printed in the same year, 1600: but it is doubtful whether they are different editions, or only the one a corrected impression of the other, from some omissions having passed in the first. See them more particularly described in the list of quartos, vol. ii.

Mr. Steevens in a subsequent note, speaks of a third, but I have never seen it. I have referred to that which Mr. Malone supposed to be the first by the letter A. to the other, by letter B*

BOSWELL.